

# The Reivers

(Continued from page 5) McQueen, who "knew that the rewards of the virtuous life could not compare to the pleasures of sin." Along for the ride (in Jefferson's very first automobile) is Ned, a black with a well-documented claim to family kinship, and who takes every opportunity to remind the white folk of that fact.

In the context of nostalgic childhood recollection, lies the simple and moving story of Cori's reformation, through her contact with young Lucius. His innocent love and faith reminds her of her real values, and with Boon's help, she determines to change her way of life. But the rest of the world doesn't make it easy. When a bigoted and malicious small-town sheriff locks them up, the price of bail is Cori. As Ned so aptly puts it, "She figured she's been sawing logs for so long, what's one more log?"

Much of the rich and sensual detail of Faulkner's prose is incorporated into the film, such as the narrator relating the way people smell (grandpa's starched shirt and cologne; the sheriff's foul sweat). A man leaving the brothel hastily slips on a wedding band; the Madam complains that it's such a busy time, with "conventions of policemen, firemen, and Elks" in town; a le-

cherous doctor takes his fee in the form of Cori's garter, declaring "Keepsakes, that's all old age leaves a man."

All this helps create a strong sense of the period and of the people involved. Certainly, some viewers may be just too cynical to believe in the Cinderella-style brothel story, and will therefore find the film irrelevant and sentimental. But with the help of Faulkner's acute if romantic observations, I, for one, was willing to swallow it, and found that *The Reivers* was quite palatable.

# ZZZZZZZZ

(Continued from page 3) grapher (Jacques Perrin), hungry for a story, will badger anyone till he gets it. They begin with just one unexpected cause for suspicion—the autopsy doesn't support the official explanation of death—but the evidence mounts at every turn. The evolution of the case is breathtaking—and one of the best police stories in recent cinema.

In all the excitement, the political ends tend to be forgotten. But they don't lose out entirely, thanks to the one twist

the film doesn't share with the two mentioned above: in the end, the forces of good have yet to win. While the opposition did gain control in 1964, they have since been overthrown in a military coup, and the uninvited ending brings the viewer back to earth hard and fast. Still, maybe for some the outcome won't be so unexpected. The shock will vary with each individual's optimism and his knowledge of world affairs.

So, with any amount of anal-

ysis *Z* remains a perplexing film. Like *Easy Rider*, it will affect people in many different ways, but make very few enemies. It is a rare film that can thrill an audience with a spectacle of the triumph of justice, and then, without losing credibility, proceed to list the punishments meted out to the just, and the sanctions adopted to prevent the story from recurring—among them prohibition of the letter *Z*, in Greek standing for "he is alive."

## The year's best flicks

(Continued from page 3) mandments. *Easy Rider* destroyed the myth of American tolerance, by showing the increasing persecution of two bikers en route to Mardi Gras, searching for a place where they could belong. *The Fixer* became symbolic not only of his people, but of oppressed people of all kinds and times, as he suffered persecution for being a Jew in 1911 Russia.

*Weekend* portrayed the end of contemporary civilization not as a nuclear holocaust, but as an automobile free-for-all. Out of the wrecks, however, a new primitive order seemed to arise to

build a new morality. *Bob & Carol & Ted & Alice* dealt with the real problems of how to be open in a closed world, and how to reconcile sex, love, and marriage. *Greetings* drew the connection between corrupt, perverted foreign policy (Vietnam), draft requirements, and the perversions of the younger generation, implying that the oldsters have forfeited their right to criticize. *The Night They Raided Minsky's* was a fast-paced attack on the nature of sexual censors and censorship.

I may have missed a few, but that's how the best of '69 look to me.

## Chicago report: repression, hope

(Continued from page 2.) recent Chicago police raids against the Black Panthers; the offeratory was a plea from the American Friends Service Committee for support for the medical aid work they are doing in North and South Vietnam. The hymns were the old favorites, "We Shall Overcome," "Give Peace a Chance," and "Ain't gonna study war no more."

Afterwards many of the crowd went across the street to Christ the King Lutheran Church, which was really nothing more than a storefront. There I spoke at length with Herb, a young black actor who said he was "close" to the Chicago Panthers, and a rotund, thirtyish white activist, a veteran of the Chicago convention.

We talked about the Movement in general, and about

things in Chicago in particular. Chicago is a tough city which lacks the establishment intelligentsia which makes the 125,000 on the Common, half million in Washington, nonviolent approach which has been so successful on this coast nonviable in Chicago. ("More Polacks here than in Warsaw," said the rotund one—thus unconsciously demonstrating that he, like the rest of the Movement, has thus far been unable to relate to the middle American Nixon so assiduously counts with the promise of stability.) The rotund one went on, telling now one of his co-workers one day told him that 75% of the country was against him. His reply was a good one—that what was really going on was that 12½% was fighting 12½% to determine who would give the

other 75% marching orders.

Still pervading everything, however, is boss Daley's machine, which seems to be able to deliver votes even in the ghettos. Herb assured me that this was being broken, and that a tightly-organized, self-sufficient black community was emerging. As we parted, I offered the wish that the coming year would be better than the last. No Marxist ideology, he said that people were waking up now, and that it would be. I told him I hoped so, for all of our sakes.

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